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SUBJECT: MGLE01: BIOGRAPHY OF POTENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR
FOREIGN MINISTER

¶1. WE have learned that Prime Minister-designate Fouad Siniora has agreed with the two main Shiite political forces to name Fawzi Salloukh as Minister for Foreign Affairs. Salloukh is a retired diplomat and a moderate Shia figure with national standing as an independent intellectual. He is 74 years old.

¶2. Fawzi Salloukh is currently the Secretary General of the Islamic University in Southern Beirut. The University was founded in 1994 by the late Shaykh Mohammad Mehdi Shamseddin, then Chairman of the Higher Lebanese Shiite Council. Although an Islamic University, the university curriculum includes a Faculty for Engineering, a Faculty for Business Administration, a Faculty for Tourism, a Higher Institute of Languages and Translation, an Institute of Information and Technology, a Medical Instrumentation Institute, a Faculty of Political Sciences and a School for Islamic Studies.

¶3. A career diplomat, Salloukh served in Algeria, London and Liberia, among other countries. In the early nineties, he was Director of Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During his time at the Ministry, Salloukh did not make a strong impression on coworkers. Fellow Shia MP Yassin Jabir told us that Salloukh is not pro-active and will not give impetus to the Ministry under his tenure. Before retiring from the Foreign Service, Salloukh was appointed Ambassador to Belgium. He authored two books in Arabic on political topics.

¶4. Salloukh is an active member of the Forum of Former Ambassadors and writes articles in the Arab language journal "Diplomacy" published by the Forum. He has an excellent reputation for being open and democratic in his thinking. His former colleagues describe him as a good diplomat. Salloukh has never identified himself with any political movement.

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